

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s):	Kazunori Taniguchi, et al.	Examiner:	Unassigned
Serial No:	To be assigned	Art Unit:	Unassigned
Filed:	Herewith	Docket:	17469
For:	SURGICAL INSTRUMENT	Dated:	February 23, 2004

Mail Stop Patent Application
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.97 and 1.98, it is requested that the following references, which are also listed on the attached Form PTO-1449, be made of record in the above-identified case.

1. U.S. Patent No. 5,383,888, dated January 24, 1995, issued to Zvenyatsky et al.;
2. U.S. Patent No. 5,275,608, dated January 4, 1994, issued to Forman et al.;
3. U.S. Patent No. 5,330,502, dated July 19, 1994, issued to Hassler et al.; and
4. U.S. Patent No. 5,549,637, dated August 27, 1996, issued to Crainich.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING BY "EXPRESS MAIL"

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Date of Deposit: February 23, 2004

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. § 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Mail Stop Patent Application, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 2313-1450.

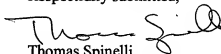
Dated: February 23, 2004


Thomas Spinelli

The above-cited references are not being submitted herewith, as copies of U.S. patents are no longer required per the waiver of 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(2)(i) in effect as of June 30, 2003. The above-cited references have been described in the specification.

Inasmuch as this Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in accordance with the schedule set out in 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b), no statement or fee is required.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Spinelli

Registration No.: 39,533

Scully, Scott, Murphy & Presser
400 Garden City Plaza
Garden City, New York 11530
(516) 742-4343

TS:cm

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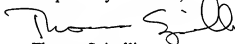
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CLAIM OF PRIORITY

Sir:

Applicants in the above-identified application hereby claim the right of priority in connection with Title 35 U.S.C. § 119 and in support thereof, herewith submit a certified copy of Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-051849 (JP2003-051849) filed February 27, 2003; 2003-051850 (JP2003-051850) filed February 27, 2003 and 2003-051851 (JP2003-051851) filed February 27, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,



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